

REMARKS

Summary of the Office Action

Claims 1 and 10-11 are objected to because of informalities.

Claims 1-8 and 10-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Hatano et al. (EP 0 935 123 A2) (hereinafter “Hatano”).

Summary of the Response to the Office Action

Applicant has canceled claims 1-8, 10 and 11 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Applicant has added new claims 12-17.

Claims 12-17 are pending.

All Claims Define Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1 and 10-11 are objected to because of informalities. Claims 1-8 and 10-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Hatano. Applicant has canceled claims 1-8 and 10-11 without prejudice or disclaimer, rendering the objection and rejection moot.

Applicant has added new claims 12-17. New claim 12 recites a voice recognition unit, including a plurality of hierarchically stored speech recognition dictionaries, extracting means for extracting the contents of specific dictionaries as a list of queuing words, storage means for temporarily storing the extracted list of queuing words, and recognition means for recognizing an input voice command by comparing the input voice command and the list of queuing words stored in the storage means. The voice recognition unit includes setting means for permitting a

user to preset a narrowing-down condition. The extracting means extracts a dictionary at the highest level of the hierarchy and a dictionary associated with the narrowing-down condition preset by the user as the list of queuing words from the plurality of hierarchically stored speech recognition dictionaries when a recognition process starts.

New claim 13 recites the voice recognition unit according to claim 12, wherein the extracting means extracts from the plurality of hierarchically stored speech recognition dictionaries a lower-order hierarchical dictionary of a dictionary used for recognition by the recognition means each time the recognition of the recognition means is performed, until a recognition result of the recognition means becomes an institutional name.

In the first recognition process recited in claim 12, when a recognition process starts, the extracting means extracts a dictionary at the highest level of the hierarchy and a dictionary associated with the narrowing-down condition as the list of queuing words. Then, in the second recognition process recited in claim 13, the extracting means extracts a lower-order hierarchical dictionary of the extracted dictionary as the list of queuing words at a second recognition process after the first recognition process recited in claim 12.

Applicant submits that the art of record does not teach or suggest at least the features of setting means for permitting a user to preset a narrowing-down condition, and extracting means that extracts a dictionary associated with the narrowing-down condition preset by the user as the list of queuing words, as recited in claim 12. Claims 13-15 depend from claim 12 and recite the same combination of allowable features recited in claim 12, as well as additional features that define over the prior art.

New claim 16 recites a voice recognition method for a voice recognition unit having a plurality of hierarchically stored speech recognition dictionaries, including permitting a user to preset a narrowing-down condition, and extracting a dictionary associated with the narrowing-down condition preset by the user as the list of queuing words. New claim 17 recites a voice recognition unit, including a setting device for permitting a user to preset a narrowing-down condition, wherein an extractor extracts a dictionary associated with the narrowing-down condition preset by the user as a list of queuing words. Applicant requests examination of new claims 12-17, and the allowance thereof.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that the pending claims are in condition for allowance, and respectfully requests reconsideration and timely allowance of the pending claims. Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative to expedite prosecution. A favorable action is awaited.

EXCEPT for issue fees payable under 37 C.F.R. § 1.18, the Commissioner is hereby authorized by this paper to charge any additional fees during the entire pendency of this application including fees due under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 and 1.17 which may be required, including any required extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0573. This paragraph is intended to be a **CONSTRUCTIVE PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME** in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a)(3).

Respectfully submitted,

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